

S. Leigh

A N

EXHORTATION

T O A L L

CHRISTIAN PEOPLE,

TO REFRAIN FROM

TRINITARIAN WORSHIP.

We preach unto you, that ye should turn unto the
LIVING GOD, who made heaven and earth
and the sea, and all things that are therein.

Acts xiv. 15.

L O N D O N :

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the following address, great use is made of a tract entitled, "*A free and serious Address to the Christian Laity, especially those, who, being of Unitarian Sentiments, conform to Trinitarian Worship,*" which is ascribed to Mr. Toulmin of Taunton. The words of other authors, as quoted by that writer, are also in some places adopted, without any reference being made to them.

A N

EXHORTATION

TO REFRAIN FROM

TRINITARIAN WORSHIP.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IT is upon a matter of great importance, that I am now about to address you. I trust you will pay all possible attention to what I am going to say. May God Almighty give you a serious, unprejudiced mind! May He open your eyes to the truth as delivered by the blessed Jesus! May He enable you to obey the dictates of your consciences, and to follow your honoured and beloved Master, through evil report, or through good report, through life, or through death! It is under a sense of the presence of the great God, and, I trust, with a view to his honour and glory, that I now exhort you, to turn from the worship of those who are *called* Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, and to confine your religious homage to that ONE GOD, THE FATHER, of whom are all things.*

* 1 Cor. viii. 5.

A 2

You

You know, my brethren, it was foretold by the apostles, that there should be a great falling away from the simplicity of Christ, and that the gospel, that precious jewel, should be greatly tarnished, in passing through the polluted hands of men. Their prophecy was remarkably fulfilled. Christianity was quickly disfigured. It was but about two hundred and fifty years ago, that our christian brethren began to find out their errors: and then the corruptions of christianity had gained so firm a footing, and had been established so many hundreds of years, that old gospel truths were looked upon by most men as mere novelties, and nothing was more common than for the catholics to cry out upon the protestants, "where was your doctrine before Luther arose? where was your church before king Edward's days?"

It was not to be expected, that men should at once obtain an unclouded view of christianity; that they should at once see through all the errors which had been collecting together for more than a thousand years. Accordingly, though (in the midst of much insult and opposition,) they removed a great deal of rubbish from the fair gospel building; they suffered no small quantity to remain: though they attacked, with all their might, one species of idolatry, they strained every nerve to support another, persecuting unto death those who would worship no other being than the one God and Father of all. So generally has the doctrine of three eternal persons, (each of whom is said to be God,) been received even by protestants; that I should not wonder if some of you, my friends, for want of knowing better, should follow the example of the catholics, and charge us, who deny that doctrine, with introducing novelties:
though

though it has been proved, to the satisfaction of many worthy and learned christians, that the *body of believers*, for the space of more than two hundred years after Christ, held that the *Father only is God*, and that the Lord Jesus was nothing more than his highly favoured son and messenger. This is very different from the doctrine of the Church of Rome, of England, or of Scotland. How widely these churches have deviated from the faith of the holy scriptures, as well as from the practice of Jesus and his apostles, with regard to religious worship, you will be able to form some judgment from the following contrast.

DIRECTIONS *relative to the* OBJECT *of* worship,
with specimens of PRAYERS—*of devout* WISHES,
&c. found in the christian scriptures.

“Thou, when thou prayest, pray to thy
 “FATHER, who is in secret, and thy FATHER,
 “who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.
 “—After this manner, therefore, pray ye:
 “OUR FATHER, who art in heaven.” Matt.
 vi. 6, 9. Luke xi. 2.

“Jesus saith,—the hour cometh, and now is,
 “when the true worshippers shall worship the
 “FATHER in spirit and in truth, for the
 “FATHER seeketh such to worship HIM.”
 John iv. 23. See also John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 16.
 xvi. 23.

“I bow my knees unto the FATHER of our
 “Lord Jesus Christ, of WHOM the whole family
 “in heaven and earth is named.” Eph. iii.
 14, 15.

“Giving thanks always, for all things unto
 “GOD, even the FATHER, in the name of our
 “Lord Jesus Christ.” Eph. v. 20. See also
 ch. ii. 18. Rom. xv. 6. Col. i. 3, 12. ch. iii. 17.
 James iii. 9. 1 Peter i. 17.

N. B. It is said (Heb. i. 6.) “when he
 “bringeth in the first-begotten into the world,
 “he saith, and let all the angels of God wor-
 “ship him:” and we read of particular persons
 worshipping our Lord. But it is well known
 that by the term *worship* is not always meant
religious adoration. It is frequently used to
 describe those marks of respect which are paid
 to great characters. Some of the persons who
 are said to have worshipped Jesus (Matt. viii. 2.)
 were Jews. Now the Jews paid *religious* worship
 to

DIRECTIONS *relative to the OBJECT of worship,*
with specimens of PRAYERS—of devout WISHES,
&c. found in the BOOK of COMMON PRAYER,
and in the writings of PRESBYTERIANS and of
 DISSENTERS.

“ The catholic faith is this, that we worship
 “ one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity.”
Athanasian Creed.

“ Then likewise the minister shall say, glory
 “ be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy
 “ Ghost; Answer, As it was in the beginning,
 “ is now, and ever shall be, world without
 “ end.”* *Morning Service.*

“ Above all things, ye must give most humble
 “ and hearty thanks to God the Father the Son
 “ and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of
 “ the world, &c.” *Communion Service.*

“ It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty,
 that we should at all times and in all places,
 give thanks unto thee, O Lord Almighty, and
 everlasting God, who art one God, one Lord,
 not *one only person but three persons*, in one sub-
 stance. For *that* which we believe of the glory
 of the Father, *the same*† we believe of the Son,
 and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference
 or inequality.” *Upon the Feast of Trinity.*

* *Pope Damasus*, is said to have decreed in a Roman
 council, that glory to the Father and to the Son and to the
 Holy Ghost, should be said or sung at the end of the psalms.
 This was about the end of the fourth century.

† “ If ye loved me (said the Lord Jesus to his disciples)
 “ ye would rejoice, because I said ‘ I go unto the Father :’
 “ for my Father is GREATER than I.” John xiv. 28.

to God only: but mention is made of one or two particular persons worshipping Jesus, at a period when, I believe, even Trinitarians themselves acknowledge that the doctrine of his being God was not taught. Consequently that worship had nothing in it of a religious nature.

It is also said, 1 Chron. xxix. 20, "And all the congregation worshipped the lord and the king:" and in Daniel ii. 46, "that Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and *worshipped* Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation (or present) and sweet odours unto him," as a mark of respect, agreeably to the eastern method of doing persons honour. Jesus also, speaks of a servant who fell down, before his master, "and *worshipped* him." (Matt. xviii. 26.) When therefore we read that the *leper worshipped* Jesus,—that his disciples, upon his ascension worshipped him, &c. it is reasonable to understand it as meaning nothing more, than that they did him homage as a great character, or as a divine prophet. You will be confirmed in this, upon finding that all their religious addresses were directed to the one God, the Father of Jesus.

"At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O FATHER, Lord of heaven and earth, because THOU hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so FATHER, for so it seemed good in THY sight." Matt. xi. 25, 26. and Luke x. 21.

"And he—fell on his face and prayed, saying, O MY FATHER, if it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless *not* as I will, but as THOU wilt." Matt. xxvi. 39. See Mark xiv. 36. Luke xxii. 42. Luke xxiii. 34, 46.

"And

“ Religious worship is to be given to God
 “ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;
 “ and to him alone.” *The Assembly's Confes. of Faith*, ch. 21.

“ The second part of prayer is adoration, and
 “ and it contains (1.) A mention of his nature,
 “ as God; and this includes, his most original
 “ properties and perfections: his unity of es-
 “ sence, that there is no other God besides him:
 “ his inconceivable subsistence in three persons,
 “ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;
 “ which mystery of the Trinity is a most proper
 “ object of our adoration and wonder, since it
 “ so much surpasses our understanding.” *Watts' Guide to Prayer*, p. 6.

“ We must give honour to the three persons
 “ in the Godhead distinctly: to the Father, the
 “ Son, and the Holy Ghost.” *Henry's Method of Prayer*.

“ Thou art the king of glory, O Christ.
 “ Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.”

— “ We therefore, pray thee to help thy ser-
 “ vants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy
 “ precious blood. Make them to be numbered
 “ with thy saints, in glory everlasting.” *Te Deum*.

“ O God the Son, redeemer of the world,
 “ have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

“ O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from
 “ the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us
 “ miserable sinners.

“ O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three
 “ persons and one God, have mercy upon us
 “ miserable sinners.

“ Whom thou hast redeemed by thy most
 “ precious blood. By the mystery of thy holy
 “ incarnation; by thy holy nativity and cir-
 “ cumcision; by thy baptism, fasting and temp-

" And Jesus lift up his eyes and said,
" FATHER I thank thee that THOU hast heard
" me." John xi. 41.

" Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I
" say, FATHER save me from this hour? but
" for this cause came I unto this hour.
" FATHER, glorify thy name." John xii.
27, 28.

" Holy FATHER, keep through thine own
" name those whom THOU hast given me."
John xvii. 11. See also John xvii. 1, 3, 5, 13,
24, 25. and Acts iv. 24, &c.

" Blessed be GOD, even the FATHER of our
" Lord Jesus Christ, the FATHER of mercies
" and the GOD of all comfort, who comforteth
" us in all our tribulation." 2 Cor. i. 3. See
also Eph. i. 3.

" Blessed be the GOD and FATHER of our
" Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his
" abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto
" a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus
" Christ from the dead." 1 Peter i. 3.*

" According to the will of GOD the FATHER
" to whom be glory for ever and ever." Gal. i.
4, 5.

* We read (Acts vii. 59.) that " they stoned Stephen
" calling (*upon God* is not in the original) and saying, Lord
" Jesus receive my spirit," or breath or life, as if he had said,
" accept this sacrifice of my life which I lay down for thy
" sake." Stephen had just seen the heavens opened and the
Son of Man, standing at the right hand of God. Is it
wonderful then that he should address that Son of Man?
When we are in similar circumstances, it is to be presumed
that we may do the same. — Paul says to Timothy (1 Tim.
i. 12.) " I thank Jesus Christ our Lord." But we may
express our thankfulness towards any absent friend and
benefactor, without directly addressing, much more without
worshipping that friend.

" Now

“ tation ; by thy agony and bloody sweat ; by
 “ thy cross and passion ; by thy precious death
 “ and burial ; by thy glorious resurrection and
 “ ascension ; and by the coming of thy Holy
 “ Ghost.

“ Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.

“ O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins
 “ of the world. Have mercy upon us. O Christ
 “ hear us. — Lord have mercy upon us. Christ
 “ have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon
 “ us. From our enemies defend us, O Christ.
 “ O Son of David, have mercy upon us. —
 “ Graciously hear us, O Christ : graciously hear
 “ us, O Lord Christ.” *Litany.*

“ For thou only art holy, thou only art the
 “ Lord : thou only, O Christ, with the Holy
 “ Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the
 “ Father.” *Communion Service.*

“ Now unto the King eternal, immortal, in-
 “ visible, the only wise God, and our God in
 “ three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
 “ be honour and glory, dominion and praise,
 “ henceforth and for ever. Amen.” *Henry on
 Prayer.*

“ — Through Jesus Christ our Lord ; to
 “ whom with thee, O Father, and thine Holy
 “ Spirit, be everlasting praises.” *Doddridge.*

“ Jesus, my God, thy blood alone,
 “ Hath power sufficient to atone.” Watts, Ps. l. li.
 “ To God the Father, God the Son,
 “ And God the Spirit, three in one,
 “ Be honour, praise and glory given,
 “ By all on earth and all in heaven.”

Watts' Doxology. See also Ps. xix, long metre, ver. 5, 6.
 Ps. xlv, c, cx, cxviii, &c.

"Now unto GOD even our FATHER, be
"glory for ever and ever." Phil. iv. 10.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal,
"invisible, the only wise GOD be honour and
"glory for ever and ever." 1 Tim. i. 17.
See also Matt. vi. 13. Luke ii. 14. Rom. i. 25.
xi. 33, 36. xvi. 25, 27. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Eph. iii.
20, 21. 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15, 16. 1 Peter v.
10, 11. Jude v. 24, 25. Rev. iv. 8, 11. vii.
11, 12.*

"Grace be to you and peace from GOD our
"FATHER and the Lord Jesus Christ." Rom.
i. 7.

"Grace, mercy, and peace from GOD our
"FATHER and Jesus Christ our Lord." 1 Tim.
i. 2.

"Grace be with you, mercy and peace from
"GOD the FATHER, and from the Lord Jesus
"Christ, the Son of the FATHER in truth
"and love." 2 John v. 3.

"Grace be unto you and peace, from HIM
"who is, and who was, and who is to come,

* There are in scripture a few ascriptions of praise and
glory to the Lord Jesus (2 Peter iii. 8. Rev. i. 5, 6. v. 9,
11, 12, 13. vii. 9, 10.) but not one, as if he were the great
God. Indeed they are not *addressed* to him, as if he were
present, except in the Revelation, where he is represented as
being actually before those who address him. It should also
be observed that he is there addressed as the *Lamb that was
slain*, as a creature capable of dying, which can never be
said of the eternal, unchangeable Jehovah. Honour will
ever be due to the holy Jesus, but not religious worship.—
Rom. ix. v. may be translated,—"the God over all (the
supreme God) be blessed for ever."

" and

“ God the Father, God the Son, and God the
“ Holy Ghost, bless, preserve and keep you.”
Matrimony.

“ and from the seven spirits,* who are before
 “ the throne,—and from Jesus Christ who is the
 “ faithful witness, and the first-begotten from
 “ the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the
 “ earth.” Rev. i. 4, 5. See also Rom. xvi.
 20, 24. 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 2. xiii. 14.
 Gal. i. 3. vi. 18. Eph. i. 2. vi. 23, 24. Phil.
 i. 2. iv. 23. Col. i. 2. iv. 18. 1 Theff. i. 1.
 iii. 11, 12. v. 23, 28. 2 Theff. i. 2. ii. 16, 17.
 iii. 5, 16, 18. 2 Tim. i. 2, 18. iv. 22. Titus
 i. 4. iii. 15. Philem. iii. 25. Heb. xiii. 20, 25.
 1 Peter i. 2. v. 10, 14. 2 Peter i. 2. Jude ii.
 Rev. xxii. 21.

BRETHREN, before I proceed, suffer me to
 ask you, if you have carefully considered the
 passages, which have been laid before you?
 Have you read them over with attention? Have
 you endeavoured to read them with impartiality?
 Have you prayed to Almighty God, that he
 would not suffer you to be carried away by
 groundless prejudices,—that he would open
 your eyes to his truth?

Brethren, it is no trifling matter.—It is
 a very serious question, whether we be to wor-
 ship one divine person or three divine persons,
 one God, or three Gods. Have you, then,
 really perused the above contrast with that

* This expression shows that this and the three preceding
 passages, should be considered as only *pious wishes* and not
prayers, for surely the writer would not pray to the seven
 spirits,

serious attention, which the subject calls for? I do not pretend to have produced every *prayer*, or *dewout wish*, or *doxology* to be met with in the New Testament. But I believe there are but few, which are neither copied nor referred to. One should hope that you will not think it too much trouble to turn to those places in your Bible, to which you are referred, and to those also, of which the words are given, that you may be satisfied one has quoted them fairly, and also selected such as are proper specimens of the whole.—Supposing that you have done this, and are satisfied; permit me to inquire, if you do not think that there is a very striking difference, between the scripture plan of worship, and the Church of England plan? * Do you not think that the Lord Jesus and his apostles prayed very differently from the members of our established church? Jesus and his apostles prayed to the FATHER, and to no other. He who is guided by the English Liturgy, prays to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, to the “holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity.” The former worshipped, *one* being: the latter worship *three* persons or beings. † The former, therefore, and those who follow their example, we may call Unitarians, the latter we may be allowed to term Trinitarians. Does it not also appear, as if the Trinitarians paid religious adoration to a mortal man? For could God

* Though the Church of *England* only is expressly mentioned here and in other places in this address; yet the same observations which are made to show that it is the duty of Unitarians to leave *that* church, are generally applicable to Trinitarian churches among the *dissenters*.

† For I know no difference between a *being* and a *person*.

redeem

redeem us by his blood? * Could the eternal, unchangeable Jehovah, be *born*, be *circumcised*, be *baptized*, be *tempted*, be in an *agony* and *bloody sweat*,—be *crucified* and *suffer*? Could the immortal ONE *die* and be *buried*? And yet the being whom, in the Litany, you address, is a being of whom this is spoken. But surely no such being is worshipped in the holy scriptures. The only being there adored, is the King, eternal, immortal, invifible. Had our heavenly Father designed that we should worship a God the *Son*, and a God the *Holy Ghost*; would he not have informed us of it in the Bible? Had he designed that we should worship a *Trinity* of Gods; would the scriptures have been silent about it? That we must worship the *Father* is plainly declared. But we have neither precept nor example, for going farther. On the contrary Jesus declares, that we must worship the *Lord our God*, and serve *him only*, † and whom he meant by the Lord, appears plainly from his directing his disciples to pray, saying, “OUR FATHER, who art in heaven.” May we not conclude then, that the worship of *two other* persons, is a merely human invention, and supported by merely human authority? But it is followed by the Church of England. Upon this ground, I exhort you to leave the Church of England,—no longer to join in her religious services,—no longer to countenance her unscriptural practices.

* Neither Acts xx. 28. nor 1 John iii. 16 countenance an idea so shocking, for there is the greatest reason to believe that Luke wrote it “feed the church of the *Lord*,” i. e. of the Lord Jesus, and it is thus quoted by the most antient christian writers. John probably wrote “herein we perceive love, in that he, &c.” (meaning Jesus.)

† Matt. iv. 10.

Worship

Worship the God of Jesus and his apostles:—worship the God of the Bible:—worship *that* God, according to the dictates of your consciences. Permit me to urge it upon you by the following considerations.

FIRST CONSIDERATION. *We ought to obey God, rather than man.* Suppose that Almighty God appeared to you, and said, “Thou shalt have no other Gods but ME, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.” Suppose that a mortal man appeared next, and directed you to pray not only to God the Father, but to a God the Son and a God the Holy Ghost. Should you hesitate which to obey? But what difference is it, whether the Almighty appear in person to you, or whether he inform you of his will by his holy messengers and prophets? What difference is it, whether one man or ten thousand men stand up in opposition to him? The path of duty is equally plain in both cases. You cannot hesitate whom to obey: you cannot hesitate whose instructions to receive. Shall *they* be your guides, who direct and require you to pray to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, or *he* who hath told us, that true worshippers must worship the FATHER?

It matters not on what *grounds men* propose their rules, or convert their sentiments into a law: whether they plead the honour of their Redeemer; whether they infer their directions from the character he sustains; or whether they plead the practice of christians for several hundred years. If it appear to us that they prescribe, what God hath not required, all that they can set before us, is to be considered as only *their* opinion, *their* deductions, *their* will; not God's word and will. Let them be ever so pious and learned, their injunctions are still

still only *human*: and the question returns, shall we hear *men* rather than God?

It matters not by how many, or how devoutly certain invocations, prayers and doxologies are used: the great question is, are they countenanced by the New Testament? You see they are not. How then can they be used without violating that reverence which we owe to God? without violating the plain authoritative directions which he hath given us? It deserves, christians, your calm and serious consideration, whether you can do this and be blameless? Will you plead that you are actuated by love and reverence to the Lord Jesus, and by your sacred regards to the Holy Spirit? But what reverence and love is that, which induces you to deviate from the plan given by your great Law-giver? What sacred regards are those which lead you to set aside or go beyond the directions of the Spirit of truth? Reverence and love may induce you to worship *Mary* and *all the saints*, as well as the *Son* of *Mary*. The Church of Rome hath as good a right to enjoin the worship of the former, as the Church of England or of Scotland hath to enjoin the worship of the latter. Your obedience is as reasonable in one instance as in the other. Reflect, my friends, upon the case of the Jews. The first commandment, was "thou shalt have no other Gods but *me*." But they worshipped idols. God therefore delivered them into the hands of their enemies. A great part of them were destroyed: the remainder were carried into captivity. But this brings me to the second consideration, which I meant to suggest to you.

SECOND CONSIDERATION. *It is our duty to beware of idolatry.* The apostle John concludes his first epistle, with—"little children keep yourselves

yourself from idols." But, is the worship (you will say) of the Church of England idolatrous? Will the members of that church be excluded, as idolaters, from the kingdom of heaven? Far be it from me to say, concerning any article of faith, in the language of the abominable Athanasian Creed, "that except a man believe it he *cannot be saved*, and *without doubt shall perish everlastingly*." You believe, I trust, that all sincere and virtuous Roman catholics will be saved. But do you not think that they are chargeable with idolatry? Where men are idolaters through ignorance, and can preserve their minds untainted by the bad influences of the practice; we may cheerfully embrace them as fellow-heirs of a common salvation. But still let us not forget that they are idolaters, and that if *we*, who enjoy more light than they, follow their examples, we shall justly become objects of the divine displeasure. If it be idolatry to worship any besides that Being who said, "thou shalt have no other Gods but ME;" if it be idolatry to worship God under a *bodily form*; how can *they* be exculpated from the charge of idolatry, who pray not only to God the *Father*, but to a God the Son and a God the Holy Ghost, and invoke the Almighty, by his *nativity* and *circumcision*, his *agony* and *bloody sweat* his *cross* and *passion*, his *death* and *burial*. Whether the worshipping of three different persons, as three distinct objects of adoration, and yet constituting but one God; whether the worshipping of a Divinity who is himself his own *Father* and his own *Son*, his own *sender* and his own *messenger*; whether the worshipping of the *immutable* and *eternal* Godhead, as having *changed* the mode of his existence, and compounded himself with the
frail

frail and mortal nature of man, on purpose that he might *die*; whether this be not a species of *idolatry*, unknown in ancient times, unaccountably monstrous and irrational, and repugnant to every *natural* feeling of an unprejudiced mind, I leave to your serious and candid consideration. It matters not that the holy Jesus is an object of this idolatry. Can you imagine that it will be acceptable to *him*, “who sought not his own glory,” — “who did not his own will, but the will of him who sent him,” and who replied to the person addressing him with the appellation of *good master*, “why callest thou *me* good? there is none good but *one*, that is God. Would you honour the Son as you honour the Father? Pay *that kind* of honour to him which he required: — not religious adoration, but that *attention to his doctrines and commands*, to which, he, and every messenger from heaven, is justly entitled. All due and grateful respect be rendered to the Son of God, to the Captain of our salvation: but I *dare* not give that religious homage and glory, to the *Son*, which I verily think, and am fully persuaded, ought to be given to the *Father only*.

It may be said that the doctrine of the Trinity is an harmless, speculative opinion, and that the practice which follows it, can have no bad moral tendency. But it is hardly possible that any false notion concerning God can be perfectly innocent, and especially a notion so very false as this, viz. that divine worship should be paid to Jesus Christ, as a being *the same in substance*, and equal in power and glory *with the Father*. When it is apprehended, that instead of *one* there are *three* beings, to whom the perfections of Deity are referred, the imaginations of men, will always make a partition of divine
attributes

attributes among them ; and in no one of them will there be that union of venerable and amiable attributes, which we ascribe to the *one only true God* ; and as the mind of man cannot contemplate more than one object at the same time, it cannot, with these notions, be possessed of that mixture of reverence and love of which the sentiments of true devotion consist. From these principles it will follow, that while the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, are equally regarded as God, one of them will be thought to possess one set of attributes, and another a different set ; one of them will be imagined to be of one disposition and another of another ; just as the heathens conceived of their several deities.

I appeal (says a great writer) to the conviction of the *Athanasians* themselves, whether, in their ideas, there be not something more *stern and inflexible* in the character of the Father, than of the Son : also, notwithstanding they ascribe divine attributes to the Father, whether, leaving the Son out of the question, something peculiarly amiable and engaging would not be wanting in what would remain of the divine Being ; and likewise, whether leaving out the Father and the Son, the *Spirit* alone, (according to their customary ideas of his nature and attributes, mercy and goodness,) would be equal to the works of creation, providence and redemption. If this be a just representation, there is nothing that the *Athanasians* really conceive of as *one* being, to whom they ascribe all the divine perfections of justice, goodness, and mercy. The Trinitarian Doctrine, must sometimes therefore, be unfavourable to real goodness, by destroying the effect of those motives, to virtue, which are derived from the imitation
of

of God. For certainly it would not be to the advantage of any man's character to resemble God the *Father*, according to the ideas that some persons have of him; ideas which they could never have entertained of him, if, by dividing the Godhead, they had not divested him of some of his essential attributes.

Is it not then your duty, brethren, to abstain from a species of idolatry, which perverts your notions of the divine character, and has a natural tendency to corrupt your moral feelings? If there be sin; if there be danger in idolatry, of any kind; can you satisfy yourselves in a conduct, which supports idolatry, which exposes you to the danger, and involves you in the guilt of it? Is this the line of conduct to be pursued by a sincere disciple of the Lord Jesus? If you coolly and impartially consider the matter, you must be convinced that it is not.—But let us proceed to the

THIRD CONSIDERATION. *It is not consistent with sincerity*, that an Unitarian Christian should take a part in any Trinitarian worship. Did you certainly know that some who join in acts of public worship, believed in their heart that there is no God, or that he is not to be worshipped, nor will reward those who diligently seek him; would you not judge such persons as acting an inconsistent and insincere part; as contradicting their own convictions, and assuming false appearances? Could you regard them as *honest* men? Be persuaded then to reflect, how nearly your conduct resembleth their's; if you continue to join in the worship of beings, who, you are convinced, have no claim on the authority of the scriptures to such prayers and praises as are offered to them? Can you ex-
culpate

culpate yourselves, in this case, from the charge of insincerity?

If you be *Unitarians*, do you in your *private* devotions pray to God the *Son* and God the *Holy Ghost*? No: you feel, that if you did, your hearts would upbraid you with insincerity. And will you dare in *public* to trifle with the Almighty and with your own consciences? If *any* actions should be clear and unequivocal, *those* should be so, which have a direct concern with the God of truth. The apostle therefore exhorted the temporizing disciples of old, to shun the feasts in honour of idols, lest they should be supposed to entertain a veneration for the idols. The christians of the following age refused to cast incense upon the altars of the heathen gods, fearing that this action would speak a language, repugnant to the sentiments of their minds. They endured every torture, and patiently submitted to a cruel death, rather than by words or deeds contradict their convictions. Their example, my brethren, is well worthy of your imitation. Indeed unless we do follow it; we shall have no right, at the conclusion of this mortal life, to comfort ourselves with the reflection, that “in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world.” There is nothing more diametrically opposite to the character of a true christian, than the great maxim of the heathen philosophers in former times and of unbelievers in these, viz. *to think with the wise and act with the vulgar*. The true christian is a character that is all of a piece. What he believes he openly professes and acts upon. He is studious to avoid even the appearance of evil, and therefore dreads giving the least countenance to any system

system or mode of worship, which in his own judgment he condemns. He fears God, and fears nothing else; and *provided his own heart does not condemn him, he cares not what men may say of him, or do unto him.*

But perhaps it will be pleaded by some, that they do not repeat what they disapprove. Upon the same principle you may join in the religious services of any body of men upon earth. You may join in the worship of the Church of Rome, in the worship of a mahometan or of a heathen assembly, and thus pass for a good catholic in France, a faithful *musliman* in Turkey, and an honest *pagan* in Africa. And think one moment, whether that principle can be good, righteous, and eligible, which will admit you as well to be members of any superstitious and idolatrous church in the world as of the Church of England itself?

Suppose that a set of unenlightened heathens, zealous for the religion of their ancestors, should erect a temple in your neighbourhood and consecrate it to the service of the gods of antiquity; should you think yourselves excusable in shunning christian assemblies, and bending your knee before the altar of Jupiter, of Venus, or of Bacchus? Should you think it sufficient to justify your conduct, that you adopted no expression inconsistent with your real sentiments? Most certainly not. You would be shocked at the idea of such a conduct. You would think yourselves under an indispensable obligation to confine yourselves to *that* worship, which is more agreeable to your christian principles, to that temple in which your feelings would not be wounded, nor your devotions disturbed, by the addresses of your fellow-worshippers to the deities of their imaginations. But for the very same

same reason, it behoves you to forsake the communion of the Church of England and join in the religious services of a society whose principles are more agreeable to your own: unless you think that the circumstance of its being established by the *civil magistrate*, creates a distinction; unless you think that the civil magistrate can change the very nature of right and wrong, and make that consistent with integrity, which would otherwise be insincere and hypocritical.

Your attendance at a Trinitarian place of worship, will lead others to imagine that you are Trinitarians. It is in vain for you to protest against fact. It only lays open your self-contradiction and hypocrisy the more. Let me put a parallel case. Suppose there are two music-meetings in the town where you live, in one of which there is never any song allowed, but what you are convinced is perfectly consistent with religion and virtue; while in the other there are some profane and indecent songs mingled with the good? Suppose your son voluntarily chose to attend the latter, and there shewed no dislike to the profaneness and immodesty of the songs, but seemed as much to join with these as with such as were innocent; would you not severely reprove and condemn him, and imagine that he had too much love to obscenity and impiety? And suppose he should tell you at home, that when he was at the music-meeting and bore a part in the tunes, he either stopped when the indecent passages occurred or else sung some other words; would you admit this as a sufficient excuse? Would you not insist upon it, that it was his duty, there, upon the spot, to publish his dislike, or rather to resolve to go thither no more. And would you not think that

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his *choosing* to avoid the innocent concert, and to frequent the vicious one, was a sign he was grown in love with profaneness and immorality? And would you not urge that his protesting against fact would not serve his turn? No more will *your* protesting against fact serve yours. Is there not all the *same* reason to condemn your practice, which is exactly like it? If you really look upon several passages in the Liturgy to be contrary to truth, and to the holy scripture, and to contain in them contradictions and idolatry; is there not as much reason, that you should leave the communion of the church, as that your son should avoid profane music-meetings? Act a consistent part. Leave your hypocrisy: dare not any longer to trifle with men and with a heart-searching God: be not ashamed of the truth in an unbelieving and scoffing age: "be faithful to the death, and you shall inherit the crown of life."*—But consider, farther,

FOURTHLY. *Your obligations to the cause of truth and of christianity.* Do you not look upon it as desirable, my Unitarian friends, that the truth should be generally known and received? But how is it possible that this should ever be the case; if it be never *professed*? Do you think, there would have been at this day any christians in the world; if all the disciples of Jesus, in the earlier ages had contented themselves with a silent acquiescence in the truth of the gospel, whilst they regularly frequented the temples of idol gods? Do you imagine that there would have been any reformation two hundred years ago, had the first protestants, never thought of

* See An Address to conforming Arians, printed in 1735; reprinted in 1788.

withdrawing themselves from the communion of the Church of Rome, nor of forming societies, whose religious services should be conducted more agreeably to the scripture plan? Can it be expected, then, that the doctrine of the *divine unity* should gain ground, whilst Unitarians remain quietly in a Trinitarian church? The experiment, however, has been tried. About an hundred years since, there was in England a body of very respectable Unitarians. They were men of the best characters: they were zealous for the truth: but they did not see that duty called upon them to absent themselves from the established places of worship. The consequence was that, upon their deaths, the doctrine of the unity of God was nearly lost in this country. Mr. Firmin a most excellent Unitarian christian of that period, became sensible towards the end of his life, that they had acted upon mistaken and pernicious principles. He began to fear that the true idea of God would be lost among christians. He was painfully apprehensive, that unless Unitarians formed themselves into distinct religious societies, the continual use of terms which in their ordinary signification, are confessed by all to imply three Gods, would *paganize*, at some time, the whole christian church. The present flourishing state of the Unitarian cause, is principally to be ascribed to the decisive and noble conduct of those honest men, who have withdrawn themselves from the established church, and sacrificed to truth and conscience every prospect of interest and emolument. Were all of you, my brethren, to imitate their example, it would be an effectual means of serving the cause of truth. But nothing short of your separation

from every Trinitarian society of christians will be of any lasting avail.

There cannot be a plainer rule of life than this, that every man should do what he would wish others to do, and what he is convinced would be best, if all others would do. No man can tell, what influence his own example may have to produce a good effect. Whatever comes of it; he by these means discharges his conscience, and (as far as following his duty in this instance can do it) *saves his own soul*.* Perhaps it would be the means of relieving from a heavy burden the mind of many a minister of the Lord Jesus, who is convinced that the offices of the church are very distant from the principles of the gospel, but whose apprehensions of the distresses of poverty are a bar to his following the dictates of truth and conscience. Such would find congregations ready to receive them as their pastors. You would become their friends and patrons. What satisfaction would it yield you? and how would you rejoice in the hope of sharing the rewards, as you had eased the trials of those righteous men. Would it not afford much greater satisfaction to your minds, than can ever result from your present course of conduct, which encourages in their hypocrisy those clergymen, who not only subscribe what they do not believe, but utter every day what they must consider as nothing less than impious falsehoods, in the form of a solemn address to Almighty God. And can it be easy to you to be accessory to other men's sins;

* See a letter to a layman on the subject of Mr. Lindsey's proposal for a reformed church, p. 18.

and,

and, thus, to be, in some measure, the cause why *some perish, for whom Christ died!*

By continuing in communion with a Trinitarian church, you not only do your part to prevent a reformation, but you essentially injure the cause of Christ, and take the most effectual step in your power to confirm and perpetuate the prejudices of unbelievers against the religion of Jesus. A clergyman (who had been a chaplain aboard a ship) writing to Mr. Whiston, says, "I was sorry that the Turks, Jews, &c. were so very much offended with the christian religion, upon these two accounts, viz. the one the worshipping of images, the other the belief and worship of the Trinity, which seemed to them to be the belief of three Gods." La Compté's History of China speaks of the heathens, as deriding the christian doctrine of a mortal God, and upon that account considering christianity as *fabulous*. Dr. Caubon says, that *this doctrine has kept more people from embracing the christian faith than any thing he knows of*. Mahomet in his Koran, says, "It is long since the infidels (meaning the christians) have said that there are three Gods; certainly there is but one." Thus does the doctrine of the Trinity prove a stumbling-block in the way of Jews, Mahometans and Heathens. Nor is it to be wondered at, if many others offended with the harsh sounds and irreconcilable principles of the established Liturgy, forsake the assemblies of public worship, and are prejudiced against christianity. Will it not be a service to such to set them an example of distinguishing between the gospel and the corruptions of it? Will it not afford them a fair opportunity to judge of its truth, if you exhibit it in its plain and native dress? Let them see what christianity is in

itself. Your continued conformity misleads them and contributes to keep out of sight the real and genuine gospel. Every error retained, obscures the light and glory of the gospel. Peculiarly pernicious, then, must be the influence of an error which beclouds the fundamental doctrine of revelation,—the *unity* of God, and multiplies the objects of religious adoration.

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS.

Though the justness of this representation be acknowledged; it may be objected perhaps by some,

(FIRST OBJECTION.) *That it does not become common, lay christians to busy themselves about a reformation, and that this matter ought to be left to the bishops and the rest of the clergy.*

But let me request such persons to remember, that the arguments and reasonings which have been adopted in this address, apply to all orders of christians. Is not religion the concern of every man? Is it not the duty of every man to obey God? Does not every man worship God for himself? Is not integrity and sincerity required in every man? Is not the truth of the same importance to every man? Is not every man under an obligation to lay no stumbling-block in the way of the conversion and salvation of unbelievers? You may as well say, my friends, that the bishops and clergy are to be just and charitable, and temperate, and pious for you, and that it is no concern of yours to cultivate these virtues. But pray consider, that if you be not *good christians yourselves*, you cannot expect to be *saved* yourselves.

Besides

Besides you have no reason to suppose that the bishops and clergy in general will ever promote a reformation. The bishops have always opposed it to the utmost of their influence. Many unsuccessful attempts have been made to obtain their concurrence in advancing that and similar objects. It cannot be reasonably looked for in men whose rank and wealth and power depend (or are supposed to depend) upon things continuing in their present state. It cannot be expected that those clergymen who have conscientiously subscribed the articles, and approve the services of the church, should be friends to any material alteration. Even some who cannot but *wish* the reformation of many things, in so old and complex a system as that of the church, have discernment enough to foresee, that if a reformation should once begin, it will not stop where they would choose to have it, and it is but too plain that they are absolutely bent upon retaining, at the hazard of perpetuating whatever themselves think wrong, many things which they are sensible cannot escape an inquiry, if any inquiry be encouraged. Like spiders in the center of an immense web, they feel at every extremity of it; knowing, that if what seem to be only the *outworks* be demolished, the whole fabric will come to the ground.*

With you therefore, my brethren, it lies to *begin* a reformation. You may not live to see the *completion* of it: but it will undoubtedly go on and be gathering ground every day. The heads of the church and of the state *must follow*, though they will not *lead*.

But to the conduct, which has been pointed out, you may, perhaps, make a SECOND OB-

* Letter to a Layman, p. 20.

JECTION, viz. *That there are many good things in the church services, and that you show your candour and charity in putting up with what you think amiss.* Such a plea would equally excuse a concurrence in the worship of the Church of Rome, from the Liturgy of which these excellent things are borrowed. Besides, no mixture of truth can alter the nature of the errors blended with it; nor any ardour and elevation of spirit in some parts, preserve us innocent in the use of those services, the leading sentiments of which are *sinful*. As to the *candour* and *charity* you wish to show; permit me to observe, that we ought to be greatly upon our guard, that we do not *impose* upon ourselves, by imagining that we possess and exercise a virtue, of which we have only the *appearance*. There is scarcely any thing more injurious to our religious character and conduct, than this *self-deception*. I fear it is too often the case that those who persuade themselves that they are actuated by *candour* in attending stately or occasionally upon the worship of *the established church*, never think of showing their candour by joining in the religious services of some *little, mean and despised sect*, and would really be *ashamed* to be seen in their poor and obscure conventicles. But in truth, such persons totally mistake the nature and proper exercise of candour. Candour does not consist in the *sacrifice of principle*, in the *countenancing and supporting of error*, but in meekly bearing with the sentiments of other people, in *loving the men*, though we *reject their opinions*, and in entertaining just views of their character and future condition. You show no true candour and charity, then, in adopting the idolatrous worship of the Church of England, or of any other church. When you publicly and uniformly show your detestation of
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that worship ; you will afford yourselves an opportunity of testifying your charity towards those who conscientiously perform it. But you will, perhaps, state, as a

THIRD OBJECTION, *That you have some office or employment in the church, in the discharge of which you benefit the community.*

But do you really think that the service, which you render to your neighbourhood is by any means equivalent to the injury you do to your own mind and to the cause of pure christianity ? Will it by any means make up for your countenancing falsehood and idolatry, for your upholding the most glaring corruptions of the gospel and bringing a discredit upon the christian religion ? Do you really imagine that God stands in any need of your insincerity, wickedness and ruin, in order to accomplish his designs ? *To do evil that good may come* is a maxim which Paul disclaims with abhorrence ; and James says, that *if a man offend*, that is knowingly, wilfully and habitually offend, *in one point he is guilty of all.*

No longer, then, support the grossest corruptions of christianity, no longer disguise the character and perfections of the Almighty, no longer, afford an occasion for the unbelief of the Jew, for the ridicule of the Gentile. Profess the genuine gospel of Jesus ; separate yourselves, from an idolatrous church ; protest against her errors ; awaken the attention of men ; excite them to inquiry ; teach them to shake off that slavish reverence for public forms, and an established religion, which screens jargon, absurdity and mysticism from a free examination. I address you as christians : I address you as persons who have learnt to look not entirely at
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the things which *are seen and temporal*, but at things which are *unseen and eternal*, as persons who think it their duty to give some attention to the concerns of religion, as well as to the concerns of business. If you be disposed to obey God rather than *men*; if you have that holy dread of *idolatry*, which animated the primitive believers; if you be friends to that *simplicity* and *godly sincerity*, in which the apostle gloried; if you have any *love for the truth*, any *reverence for the gospel*, any regard to the *salvation of mankind*; I am persuaded you will feel yourselves disposed to pay some attention to the thoughts which have now been submitted to your consideration. But there are always difficulties to be encountered in treading the path of duty, and especially *that* part of it, to which we have hitherto been strangers. Happy the man, who is not discouraged by them, from proceeding! Happy the man, who has resolution and steadiness enough to encounter all, and to "press forward to the mark" of the prize of his high calling of God in "Christ Jesus!" Some discouraging thoughts are now, perhaps, presenting themselves to your minds, my friends. Be upon your guard, I pray you, that they have not more influence upon you than they deserve. Consider that if you be Unitarians in principle, every suggestion which pleads in favour of your conformity to Trinitarian worship, pleads in *opposition to your duty and your eternal interest*. One difficulty, and which, indeed, may be considered as an unanswerable objection to the conduct here recommended, is that

(FOURTH OBJECTION.) *There is no place of worship near you, in which God, the Father only, is worshipped.* It is a most melancholy thought, that this should be the case with any of you.
But,

But, alas! it must be acknowledged, that where there are even *dissenting* societies, there are frequently no *Unitarian* ones, many dissenters being as firm Trinitarians, as any Church of England man, and conducting their religious services in a manner equally repugnant to the feelings and principles of a conscientious worshipper of the *one only living and true* God. But when there is a dissenting society of Unitarians, you ought, undoubtedly, to join them in preference to the Church of England: for though you like a *Liturgy* better than *extempore* prayer; yet a matter of this kind ought never to be considered of so much importance, as to make you sacrifice sincerity, truth, and the gospel cause. But if there be in your neighbourhood no Unitarian place of worship of *any* kind, there is so much the greater call for your exertions. A clear, explicit, open, and decisive conduct, is absolutely necessary; if you would serve the cause of God and of truth. If you be the *only* man in your neighbourhood whose eyes Almighty God has opened to the truth; still be persuaded to "flee from idolatry." If you make it a point of conscience to devote the Sunday, or any other part of the week, to religious purposes, your conduct will soon be noticed, some persons will be led to inquire, and it *cannot* be long before you will meet with some, ready to join you in social worship, upon a scriptural plan. A cause so good, *must* gain advocates, when it is properly understood. Nothing is wanting but, *attention and inquiry*, and the truth will flourish. Let the steadiness of your conduct, added to the perfection of your character, excite that attention. As soon as you meet with any ready to join you in adoring the *ONE* God; you may enjoy all the comforts and advantages
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of social worship. You cannot imagine that it is *essential* to the utility and acceptableness of social worship, that *numbers* should be assembled together in a house devoted to the purpose, and with all the attendants of a minister regularly educated, and other officers.

In the first ages of christianity we read of *churches* that did not extend beyond the circle of a family, as the church in Nymphas' house,* and that in the house of Philemon, &c. It cannot admit of a doubt whether it be not preferable to worship the only true God, with one's *family only*, agreeably to the scriptures, and in the language of sincerity and truth, than to join the largest society with every circumstance of state, convenience and splendour, in a worship which the scriptures forbid and our hearts disapprove. You will find it more easy to put such a plan into execution than you might, at first, imagine. Of useful sermons, there is a great variety, such as Tillotson's, Secker's, Balguy's, Jortin's, Lardner's, Bourn's, Holland's, and Priestley's. You will be well able to conduct the devotional services, with the assistance of Mr. Lindsey's reformed Liturgy, of that used at Salisbury, † or of Dr. Priestley's "Forms of Prayer, and other offices, for the use of Unitarian Societies." In these publications you will find services for the Lord's supper and for baptism, which it is unreasonable to suppose can be conducted properly by none but a regularly ordained minister, for nothing of this kind is intimated in the New Testament.

By thus maintaining a noble independence and consistency of conduct in all your religious

* Col. iv. 15.

† There is also a valuable one, lately published, to be used at the new Unitarian chapel in Manchester.

concerns,

concerns, you will improve and confirm your own character; you will be an honour to the cause you espouse; you will render essential service to mankind, and be enabled to look forward with pleasure to the great day of retribution. You and your fellow-labourers in the cause of God, will be like *a city set upon a hill*: you will be the means of disseminating far and wide the principles of true christian worship, and of diffusing a spirit of serious and rational zeal.

But perhaps you will start another difficulty, viz. that

(FIFTH OBJECTION.) *You have reason to expect a violent opposition to your separating from the church, on the part of your nearest friends and connections.* Your case is undoubtedly to be pitied. But possibly your fears lead you to imagine that they will carry their resentment much farther, than there is any just ground for believing they will. When they see that you act upon *principle*, that the favour and approbation of God, is the grand motive of your conduct, and that you are *steady* in what you esteem to be the path of duty; their resentment will probably be softened, and their confidence and affection towards you will gradually revive. Indeed the mere circumstance of your dissent being an *old* thing (as it must in time become) will naturally wear off that *dread* towards it which was felt at first, and they will at length perceive and acknowledge that it has not made you such a *strange being* as they imagined it would. At any rate the line of duty is clear. Your hardships will be no greater than those which our Lord laid it down as absolutely necessary that his first followers should endure, than those which were often experienced by the reformers of the sixteenth century, or than those which every faithful disciple of Jesus will be

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ready to undergo, when called to them in the course of duty. "He that loveth father or mother more than me (saith our Lord) is not worthy of me. He that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all which he hath, his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." May God give you grace to act up to your christian profession!

But some perhaps will say,

(SIXTH OBJECTION.) I cannot bear to be so *singular*, as to leave the church in which I have been educated, especially if it be necessary to make my house a place of social worship.

But let such persons consider, that the greater the *effort*, the greater will be the *merit*, and that where *duty* is concerned, all other considerations, be their weight greater or less, ought to be postponed to it. We christians ought to be thankful that we have nothing more difficult to encounter. What would we have done in the day of adversity, if we cannot bear prosperity? And it ought not to be forgotten, that none will be distinguished by our great Master as his worthy disciples and followers, but those who shall be ready to risk and even to abandon every thing in the world, and even to *take up their cross* for the sake of his gospel. Every situation and circumstance of things, has its peculiar difficulties, which wise and conscientious men will lay their account with meeting and be prepared to bear. This, in fact, must be done by every person who does not adopt the principle of *universal conformity to the world* and who will not make his religion subservient to it. But what will

will such religion do for a man, when the world, and all the follies and vanities of it shall be no more? *

It is *your* professed faith, as christians, that assuredly as the great Author of our religion, the Ambassador of truth and grace has already appeared in the world, he will be revealed from heaven, to raise his sincere disciples to glory and immortality. How will all the great and splendid things of life disappear before the brightness of his coming! Is there need of more than one moment's calm reflection to convince you, that then the only thing of consequence will be his approbation? And can we really entertain the serious and rational hope of it, merely because we have professed his religion, whilst we have joined with the *many* to countenance, and with the *great* to support the corruptions of it? Will it be then a valid plea, that *fashion* and *interest* urged us to depart from his laws, to act inconsistently with our own convictions, and obey *men* rather than God? Conceive how your minds would be affected were the awful appearance of the Judge, an event which you had more grounds to look for, within a few days. Were the heavens to open and you to see him coming in the clouds, in whom you believe as the guide to eternal life—him who declared that the “true worshippers, will worship the FATHER in spirit and truth,”—him who, was himself “the faithful and true witness,” and died “leaving us an example to follow his steps”—him who hath warned us, that whosoever loveth father or mother more than him, is not worthy of him—him who hath laid it down as a certain principle that his true

* Preface to Forms of Prayer, &c.

disciples are not of the world ! It is left to your own minds to imagine, how a conduct formed from a deference to the example and authority of *worldly men*, or from the views of profit and greatness, will appear to such a judge : and to *your own hearts*, when summoned to his tribunal, to receive according to your works.

You believe the christian religion to be true. Believing it to be true, can you doubt the propriety of my laying these considerations before you, or resist the force of them ? You cannot but believe that the great founder of your faith will verify all his declarations : and then what will be the state of those, who have regarded the *world* and what it can offer, more than *his word* and promises ? Can you look forward to their situation without fear, without solicitude to escape the shame and disgrace of it ? These expectations are sufficient to expose the weakness and folly of being captivated by the pomps and emoluments, enslaved by the authority, or ensnared by the fashion of any religious establishment whatsoever. These are things, which will all vanish away as airy phantoms. But truth, fidelity to God, and integrity of character, are things of lasting excellence and worth, of essential importance on that day, which will try all things : everlasting honours await them : they will draw after them, in the final issue, stability, glory, and life for evermore.

It is but a short time before we shall find the truth of these things : they should therefore affect our minds, and influence our conduct, as if they were to be immediately revealed. “ It is but a short time that we have, any of us, to abide here ; and therefore we should lose no opportunity of bearing our testimony to the truth of God.”

Whatever

Whatever be your circumstances, dread joining, with your enlightened and informed minds, in *unscriptural, insincere* and *idolatrous* worship, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, that the Father, seeketh such to worship him, as, "worship him in *spirit and in truth*:" and "thou shalt love THE LORD THY GOD, and him ONLY shalt thou serve."

Dread also that awful voice from heaven, respecting all antichristian corruptions of the gospel in figurative Babylon: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues."

That you may be daily growing in grace; that you may act with the firmness of men, with the seriousness and consistency of christians, is the sincere prayer of

Your affectionate Friend

and Brother in the Lord Jesus.

MAY 29, 1789.

IT is the opinion of many learned men, that in the following passages, among others, the translators of our present English Bible, have made considerable mistakes.

Isaiah ix. 6. is rendered by ancient and many modern interpreters, "His name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the strong, the mighty, the father of the age."

Acts

Acts vii. 59. the word *God* is not in the original.

Acts xx. 28. In the best and most ancient manuscript copies of the New Testament, it is "feed the church of the Lord, which he hath purchased with his blood," not *God*.

Rom. ix. 5. might be translated, "of whom (i. e. of the Israelites) Christ came: *God*, who is over all be blessed for ever."

1 Cor. i. 2. should be translated (say some learned critics) "with all that in every place, are called by the name of Jesus Christ our *Lord*."

Phil. ii. 6. would have been more justly translated, "who, being in the form of *God*, thought not the being like to *God*, a thing to be greedily seized by him; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself," &c.

Heb. i. 8. should rather be rendered, "but concerning the Son he saith, *God* is thy throne for ever and ever," that is, *God* is the support of thy throne, &c.

1 John iii. 16. Most copies omitting the word *God*, read this verse thus, "herein perceive we love, in that he laid down his life for us."

1 John v. 7, 8. should read thus "for there are three that bear record, the spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one." The words [*in heaven, the Father, the word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, and there are three that bear witness in earth*] have never been proved to be in ANY Greek manuscript, before the invention of printing, nor were ever cited by any of the numerous writers in the whole Arian controversy, concerning the Trinity, in the fourth century. In the English Bibles in the reign of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. they were printed

printed in a *different character*, to signify their being wanting in the original.

Rev. i. 11. The words [*I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*] were probably not written by the author of the book, as they are said to be wanting in all the best manuscript copies.

You will find more upon this subject in "The Chatechist: or, An Inquiry into the Doctrine of the Scriptures, concerning the one true God," price 2s. or in the "Sequel to an Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick," both by the Rev. Mr. Lindsey. The Unitarian doctrine is also supported in a masterly manner, in "Discourses on the Divine Unity, by W. Christie, jun. Merchant of Montrose," a gentleman who has pursued the course of conduct recommended in the above address, conducting the religious services of a newly raised society, whose professed object is to worship the one only true God.

T H E E N D.



